

**Friday, 4 February 2005 at 10:00 a.m.**

Dane County Highway Garage, 2302 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison, WI

- Chair Shroble called the meeting to order at 10:06.** *The Chair opened the meeting by reading a card from Bill Gardner thanking WRRTC for its condolences upon the recent loss of his wife, Lucy Stone Gardner.*

- Full Commission - Roll Call:**

William	Agnew	Rock	Present
Charles	Anderson	Iowa	
Phil	Blazkowski	Rock	Present
Marshall	Bown	Rock	
Lois	Brown	Grant	Present
Tom	Cornford	Crawford	Present
Steve	Foye	Iowa	Present
Joel	Gaalswyk	Sauk	Present
Gene	Gray	Dane	
Chris	Klar	Dane	
Marty	Krueger	Sauk	
Ron	Leys	Crawford	Present
Richard	Manke	Waukesha	

Marion	Martin	Grant	Present
Bill	Miles	Walworth	
Karl	Nilson	Waukesha	
Phil	Roberts	Iowa	
Henry	Schoeberle	Rock	Present
Ted	Sheckler	Crawford	
Gerald	Shroble	Walworth	Present
Bill	Sills	Walworth	Present
Robert	Sinklair	Sauk	Present
Ed	Stoltz	Waukesha	Present
Forrest	Van Schwartz	Dane	Present
Larry	Volz	Sauk	Present
Velma	Weadge	Grant	

**Others present for all or part of the meeting:** Joni Graves (SWWRPC / WRRTC staff); Jim Matzinger (Dane County Transportation / WRRTC staff); Frank Huntington (WisDOT BORAH); Ken Lucht (WSOR); Chris Keller (*Sauk Prairie Eagle*); Steve Piotrowski (Senator Herb Kohl's Madison office); Tom Clouder (Office of the Commissioner of Railroads); Bill Gross (Waukesha).

- Motion to Accept Proof of Public Notice / Stoltz / Sinklair / Motion passed unanimously.**
- Motion to approve the Agenda / Volz / Cornford / Motion passed unanimously.**
- Motion approving the 7 January 2005 Executive Committee Minutes / Stoltz / Foye / Motion passed unanimously.**
- Resolution adopting Motions approved by the Executive Committee at the January 2005 meeting / Sinklair / Sills / Motion passed unanimously.**
- WSOR Monthly Operator's Report – Ken Lucht**
  - The report included an update on general maintenance activities; state rehab projects; WSOR's capital projects; and continuing issues and topics.
  - Lucht explained that in July 2005 WSOR will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> year (there will be an event on Saturday July 23<sup>rd</sup>) and that 2005 is also the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Janesville Roundhouse (an event is scheduled for July 9<sup>th</sup>).
  - Lucht reported that WSOR's Coordinating Committee has not met recently, but a meeting will be held soon and a notice will be sent to staff and to all Commissioners.
  - In response to a previous request, Lucht distributed a map indicating the condition of the existing rail infrastructure (see attached). It was noted that the thin lines on map indicate track that is likely 90 lb rail. Discussion focused on specific sections of the map, which Lucht may further update; Van Schwartz requested that bridge information also be included. Huntington explained that WisDOT is currently screening applicants for a study to look at the bridge structures to determine their original design standards and what would be needed to bring them to 286K standards (it will probably be six months or a year before completion of the study).

**Maintenance of the Mazomanie Line** *(not on the Agenda)*

As follow-up to an ongoing discussion item, Steve Foye provided a price quote from WSOR for maintenance work on the Mazomanie Line in the amount of \$4,300 (not including staff time for the work in question) and proposed that the Commission pay for this. The project would be to mow and spray approximately 8-plus feet on each side of the railroad center-line. Huntington explained that WSOR has a contractual responsibility to perform maintenance. Some Commissioners asked why the maintenance work has not been done on this line if it is required and asked why the Commission would be asked to pay for it. Lucht said that for the railroad, it's a matter of resources.

**FOLLOW-UP:**

- A. Foye asked that this item be on the next agenda for possible action.
- B. Lucht agreed to provide more information on costs for the March mailing.
- C. Because several members of the Commission expressed interest in this issue, Graves explained that the March meeting would be posted using a Badke Notice, in the event that one-half or more of the members of the Full Commission may attend the regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting for information gathering purposes.

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**8. WisDOT Report** – Frank Huntington

The update included information on 1) WisDOT's acquisition of the Saukville to Kiel Line; 2) the new Amtrak Station at the Milwaukee airport and the state's two-year ad campaign to promote it, noting the efforts of Senator Kohl to secure funding; 3) in the state's current budget process WisDOT has submitted its budget with an additional \$1million/year for rail project funding; and 4) a planned study that will look at freight hauling's impact on pavement.

**9. Sauk Bridge – Conditions Report** – Matzinger and Huntington explained that they have talked with the engineering firm and that the written report is expected to be available for the next WRRTC meeting.

**10. Federal Appropriations – Call for Proposals from Senator Herb Kohl** – Steve Piotrowski, from Senator Kohl's Madison Office, was invited to the meeting following a presentation by another Kohl staffer to the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Senator Kohl is a member of the U.S. Senate's Appropriations Committee and has requested information about projects in the state – particularly those that support agriculture, rural development, and economic development – for possible inclusion in the federal Appropriations budget. As Piotrowski explained, although there are certainly no guarantees that an application would be funded, this is an opportunity to advance projects for possible consideration. After some discussion, including philosophical concerns about the appropriate use of tax dollars, **Motion to proceed with a proposal to upgrade rail infrastructure to support the Boscobel ethanol plant project / Foye / Stoltz** / in subsequent discussion Stoltz asked if this IS the top priority project. Lucht said that there is no other project on the railroad as "hot" as [the Boscobel project] with a link to agriculture and economic development. He added that if the Boscobel site doesn't work, two other communities on that line have expressed interest and that the segment is underutilized for shipping corn. Lucht agreed to provide staff with information to support WRRTC's proposal / **Stoltz called the question / Motion passed unanimously.**

Huntington reiterated Senator Kohl's involvement in the funding for the Amtrak station and said that it wouldn't have happened without him.

**11. Request for Private Crossing Permit (Model Airplane Club, City of Waukesha)** – Lucht (action item)

Lucht explained that it was recently brought to their attention that a Model Airplane Club in Waukesha currently has illegal access across the tracks. It had been a legal farm crossing but after the farmer sold his property to the Airplane Club, the land was no longer used for ag purposes, and the permit automatically expired. The WSOR would like to make this crossing legal by having WRRTC grant the group a Private

Crossing Permit for recreational purposes. It was reported that the WRRTC's attorney, Eileen Brownlee, and Frank Huntington have both looked at the permit and ok'd it with some small changes. Lucht explained that there would be no liability to the Commission or to the railroad. **Motion to approve the request for a Private Crossing Permit for the Pebble Creek Fliers Model Airplane Club (City of Waukesha) / Leys / Sills / Motion passed unanimously.**

**12. WRRTC Financials & Contracts – Jim Matzinger**

- a. **Motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports for December 2004 and January 2005 as presented / Foye / Volz / Motion passed unanimously.**
- b. **Motion to approve payment of invoices received by WRRTC / Foye / Stoltz / Motion passed unanimously.**
- c. **Motion to adopt the 2005 Budget, as presented / Sills / Brown / Motion passed unanimously.**
- d. **Motion to proceed with Johnson Block for the 2004 Audit (estimated to cost \$2,500 to \$3,000) /** Matzinger explained that in addition to the Audit, under new IRS GASB 34 requirements the Commission's assets will have to be valued and, since the land is owned by the state and the improvements are owned by the Commission, he will be working with Huntington to identify "historical costs" as a part of this / **Sills / Stoltz / Motion passed unanimously.**

**FOLLOW-UP:**

- A. As a part of the financial discussions, there were several comments about the need to look at revenue sources and that, in the future, this may include increasing the rent received from the Commission's railroad operator.
- B. Much of the discussion focused on requiring that appropriate fees be imposed for leases and permits. The Commission had approved levying fees in 2004, but did not adopt a formal fee schedule. Fees have been included in WRRTC's permits, like the one granted to the Pebble Creek Fliers (see above), but it appears that collection has not been consistent.
- C. It was requested that the issue of fees be on the March Agenda.
- e. **Update on Project 12 – Anderson Siding/Milton Junction** – The project is expected to be closed-out shortly and it will go to the WRRTC / EWCRC Cost-Sharing Committee established under the 66.0301 Agreement.
- f. **Use of County-Specific Designated Funds – Steve Foye**  
Commissioner Foye, Iowa County, had asked that this item be on the Agenda. He explained that their County Board of Supervisors wants the money that Iowa County has in its reserve account with WRRTC to be used to purchase replacement ties for use in the Village of Avoca and Arena; Foye reported that if Iowa County purchases the ties, WSOR would install them. In the discussion that followed, several Commissioners expressed concern that the rail transit commission's role has been regional and that this would be a significant philosophical change.

Huntington explained that, historically, the Commission has believed that the wisest use of county money was to match other money, but that this proposal would put Iowa County in the position of assuming maintenance responsibilities from the railroad operator.

**FOLLOW-UP:**

- A. It was requested that this issue be forwarded to the next meeting and that a legal review be presented.

**13. New Business**

- a. **Spring Grove, IL: property line question** – no action until more information is available.

**14. Updates/Old Business**

- a) **66.0301 Sub-Committee** – no report.
- b) **Advocacy Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee** – no report.

**15. The meeting adjournment at 12:35 p.m.**

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**Recorded By:**

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Joni Graves, SWWRPC Transportation Planner

**Approved:**

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Date | William Agnew, WRRTC Secretary